



## IRRIGATION & ELECTRICAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OF ARIZONA, INC.

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GLEN VORTHERMS – PRESIDENT ROBERT VANHOFWEGEN – VICE-PRESIDENT NOEL CARTER – SECRETARY DONOVAN NEESE – TREASURER SHERI FARAG – AT-LARGE ELSTON GRUBAUGH – AT-LARGE
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### **IEDA BOARD WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES - Draft**

September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 12:30 PM

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Irrigation & Electrical Districts Association of Arizona, Inc. (“IEDA”) was held on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The following IEDA Members attended the meeting:

Todd Angle – San Tan Irrigation District  
Mitch Basefsky – CAP (Virtual)  
Noel Carter – BWCDD  
Heather Cole – APA (Virtual)  
Sheri Farag – SRP (Virtual)  
David Fitzgerald – AEPCO (Virtual)  
Darrin Francom – CAP (Virtual)  
Ed Gerak - IEDA Executive Director  
Josh Grier – SRP (Virtual)  
Elston Grubaugh – Wellton-Mohawk (Virtual)  
Daniel Pritchard – KR Saline – Virtual  
Taylor Howerter – RID  
Leslie James – CREDA (Virtual)  
Sine Kerr – USDA-FSA Executive Director  
Adam McAnally – SRP (Virtual)  
Jason Moyes – Moyes, Sellers Hendricks (Virtual)  
Donovan Neese - RID  
Emily Rice – B3 Strategies  
Jeff Ritter – CAP (Virtual)  
Scott Saline - TID, HVPD, Aguilla, Ocotillo (Virtual)  
Meghan Scott – Scott & Rogers (Virtual)  
John Scremin – RWCD (Virtual)  
Bill Van Allen – ED6 (Virtual)  
Shelton Van Allen – ED6 (Virtual)  
Robert VanHofwegen – ED8 (Virtual)  
Glen Vortherms – MWD, IEDA Board President  
Jeff Woner – KR Saline (Virtual)

President Vortherms called the meeting to order at 12:32 PM

Based on a roll call, a quorum was established.

Mr. Gerak welcomed Sine Kerr to the meeting, and introductions were made.

Mrs. Kerr provided an overview of her role and how it fits within USDA. There are 29 agencies in USDA, of which Farm Service Agency is one of. The FSA National Director is a farmer, so they have experience in what farmers go through. Arizona FSA has 8 county offices, and Sine has been able to visit 7 of those offices already. These offices work with farmers as an interface to help their farms and ranches and what services that the federal government can provide. There are multiple items that the agency is working on, but drought relief is one of the biggest right now. Mrs. Kerr doesn't see much impact from the proposed USDA reorganization, as FSA is already local. Some of the initiatives that this administration is doing to protect farmland was highlighted. Mr. Gerak thanked Mrs. Kerr for her time and let everyone know that she has agreed to be on the IEDA Annual Meeting Agriculture panel in February.

President Vortherms requested a motion for approval of the minutes from last meeting.

A motion was requested for approval of the minutes for August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Donovan Neese made a motion to approve the minutes. Noel Carter seconded the motion. A vote was called for and the motion passed.

Mr. Gerak presented the 2026 draft budget for review. He walked through the rationale behind the 2026 budget and showed the actuals from 2022 to 2024. 2025 was shown as YE trending estimates. The total dues to be collected in 2026 is slightly lower than 2025.

Mr. Gerak showed estimated dues based on the draft budget. Most were essentially the same, with a few adjustments to align the dues with the approved formula in 2021. This was presented for information, with an anticipation of approval at the October meeting.

Next, Emily Rice provided an update on statewide issues. The impact of the recent assassination of Charlie Kirk, and more specifically, the campaign arm of Turning Point are yet to be determined.

There are multiple legislators that are not seeking reelection at the state level, whether it is because of money, political climate, switching seats or otherwise. There are eleven house members (8 R's/3 D's) & six senators (1 D/5 R's).

Mrs. Rice mentioned that a small workgroup will be looking at updating the Electrical District statutes. Both the ID & ED standards haven't been touched in a while and may benefit from an update to ensure current and modern practices are contemplated by the standards. There is an interest to clarify the bonding statutes in Arizona Revised Statutes. Two previous attempts to update the ID statute failed due to Senate President Warren Peterson holding a grudge with an irrigation district.

Mr. Gerak provided an update on Ted Cooke's nomination. He was slated to be on the Senate ENR hearing on September 4<sup>th</sup>, but was pulled from the agenda last minute. The Senate approved the nuclear option on September 15<sup>th</sup>, allowing for advancing nominees en bloc, and Senator Thume has already advanced a slate of 48 nominees. There are multiple nominees still waiting a hearing or confirmation, and delaying these seems to be another form of political gamesmanship lately.

With only about 25% of the house and senate appropriations bills being passed, the likelihood of a Continuing Resolution looks likely. President Trump has advocated for a clean CR. It looks like a funding extension to November 20<sup>th</sup> is on the table, which would mean that an Omnibus bill may be coming before year end. Not sure if that would provide an opportunity to include any legislative issues (e.g. Help Hoover Dam) into the omnibus. Mr. Gerak will be back in DC at the end of the month to discuss.

Mr. Gerak also provided an update on the national gerrymandering, the desire to eliminate mail-in ballots from the President and the recent “law and order” initiative from this administration.

Robert VanHofwegen provided an update on water issues. These included zebra mussels showing up in the Colorado River, concerns on groundwater impacts due to mining, continued issues with the State of Colorado when it comes to water, and major planned infrastructure projects in California. Mr. Gerak highlighted how the groundwater mining concerns and California’s projects might impact Arizona in the future.

There is an Ag-to-Urban meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup> that everyone was made aware of.

Meghan Scott provided an update on the Post-2026 negotiations. Mr. Gerak asked her to explain how the feds (Secretary of the Interior) impact the upper vs. lower basins. The Secretary is Watermaster of the Lower Colorado River, and outside of Compact compliance, there isn’t any role that the feds play in the Upper Basin. The states are continuing to negotiate, but the feds have issued a deadline of November 11<sup>th</sup> to bring a plan, or they will move forward with their own alternatives.

Mr. Gerak provided an update on the ACC rescission of the Renewable Energy Standards. While it does not directly impact IEDA members (public power members are exempt from ACC regulations), we were working on trying to get large, old hydropower recognized as a renewable for REC valuation.

The administration is seeking to revoke permits, claw back funding or get multiple offshore wind projects cancelled. The current administration’s opposition to wind and solar is causing some firms (e.g. NV Energy) to approach FERC to allow developers to exit contracts without penalties.

Mr. Gerak provided an update on nuclear developments and what a new startup is doing similar to geothermal, by using below grade parking structures to heat and cool buildings in the summer and winter.

Mr. Gerak also touched on Governor Hobbs executive order on affordable energy, citing nuclear, wind and solar. California also approved the Pathways Initiative, which allows for an independent organization to oversee the WEIM and EDAM, an important step for the regionalization of energy markets among the Western states.

Leslie James was invited to provide an update on CREDA. She reported that initial discussions on a fall High Flow Experiment have begun; USFWS has solicited comments on a 5-year status review for 20 species, including the humpback chub (a required first step prior to any recommendation on status change to maintain threatened status or to move to delisting); and how the Cool-Mix experiment may cost more than originally expected due to increased by-pass because the turbines are experiencing rough zones. Due to the low water conditions, there is an increased likelihood of invasives going through the dam next summer, which is more justification for a thermal curtain.

Donovan Neese provided an overview of the financial situation. Year End dues are projected to be above budget. Consulting fees are less than expected and most expense categories are on budget.

Mr. Gerak updated the board regarding his upcoming trips. President Vortherms asked for a list of items that were to be discussed in DC. They are focusing on Ted Cooke's nomination, the PRB issue, the DOI Overhead Rate issue and the Upper Colorado System Conservation Program (Senator Gallego).

There wasn't anything to update regarding the Public Power PAC of Arizona.

President Vortherms opened the floor to member comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 P.M.